

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 05190 061237Z

53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-01 SY-05 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SCS-03 SCA-01 OPR-02 FBO-02 SAM-01 IO-13 ACDA-07 /092 W

----- 031439

R 061036Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9005

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE DAMASCUS 5190

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS SY

SUBJ: TWO BOMB EXPLOSIONS DISTURB DAMASCUS NIGHT AUG 5-6

1. BOMB REPORTEDLY EXPLODED AT DAMASCUS FAIRGROUND 2330
AUGUST 5 NEAR TURKISH PAVILION, DAMAGING WALL AND PAVILION
DIRECTOR'S OFFICE. WE UNDERSTAND ONE PASSERBY KILLED AND FIVE OTHERS
INJURED.

2. SECOND EXPLOSION OCCURRED 0120 AT TENNIS COURT BEHIND
OLD OFFICERS CLUB BUILDING NEAR OMAYYAD HOTEL AUGUST 6. EMBOFF
LIVING IN NEARBY HITEL OBSERVED LIGHT-COLORED VOLKSWAGEN LEAVING
GENERAL AREA SECONDS AFTER EXPLOSION. BOMB, WHICH EMBOFF
SAID COULD HAVE BEEN GRENADE OR SMALL EXPLOSIVE CHARGE,
CAUSED SOME DAMAGE TO FENCE AROUND TENNIS COURT AND SHRUBBERY
BUT RESULTED IN NO OBSERVED INJURIES. SECURITY FORCES ARRIVED
ON SCENE WITHIN FIVE MINUTES.

3. UNABLE CONFIRM WIDESPREAD REPORT THAT 2-3 DAYS PREVIOUSLY
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A BOMB HAD EXPLODED IN APARTMENT OF PROMINENT (UNIDENTIFIED)

MEMBER OF RULING BAATH PARTY REGIONAL COMMAND LIVING IN MEZZE SUBURB. OTHER VERSIONS ASSERT DEP PRIME MINISTER HAYDAR'S APARTMENT WAS THE TARGET. (HAYDAR'S APARTMENT IS IN AREA NEARBY THIS EMBASSY. THERE MAY BE TWO SEPARATE INCIDENTS AT ISSUE.)

4. COMMENT: WE ASSUME SARG SECURITY PERSONNEL WILL FOCUS THEIR SUSPICIONS ON IRAQIS AND PALESTINIANS AS PERPETRATORS OF EXPLOSIONS. DETONATION OF EXPLOSIVES, REPORTED PARAS 1 AND 2, AT SUCH LATE HOURS INDICATES WHOEVER BEHIND OPERATIONS NOT INTENDING TO CAUSE GREAT LOSS OF LIFE BUT RATHER NETTLE SARG AND DEMONSTRATE INABILITY OF SECURITY FORCES TO DO THEIR JOB. STAGING INCIDENT AT FIAR GUARANTEED TO WIN MAXIMUM ATTENTION OF FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN DAMASCUS, MANY OF WHOM HAVE PAVILIONS OPEN THERE. HEIGHTENING OF ALREADY STRINGENT SECURITY PROVISIONS AT FAIR GROUNDS HAVE ALREADY BEEN NOTED.
MURPHY

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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